



Weymouth & Portland
Borough Council

WEYMOUTH PUBLIC ART TRAIL ARTIST BRIEF

Summary

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council wish to commission a series of permanent public sculptures/installations on the theme of water, creating a trail around the town that will collectively tell the story of Weymouth, as well as highlight the locations of a number of water bottle refill units to be installed in the town. We seek to deliver up to 6 artworks in the form of a trail. There are therefore 6 opportunities available.

Design and production budget per commission: £14,000

Deadline for applications: Friday 1st March 5pm

Selected artists appointed by: Friday 15th March

Contract duration: 12 months (approx.)

Enquiries: carolyn@b-side.org.uk

Brief Outline

Weymouth has a fascinating history dominated by its waterside location, with a beautiful sandy bay, a working harbour and backwater wetlands full of wildlife. Weymouth & Portland Borough Council (WPBC) seek to commission a number of artists to create a series of artworks that will enhance the built environment and improve the visitor experience and public profile of the town. The artworks will form a trail around the town that reflects Weymouth's significant relationship with water, whilst highlighting, or signposting, water bottle refill units installed at various locations around the town.

The term 'artworks' can be interpreted in many ways – from sculptures to installations and things in between. The artworks can be created in any material, as long as it is robust enough to withstand being installed in the streets. The contracts will be for permanent outdoor artworks and a ten-year maintenance schedule will be agreed with the artists.

During the public consultation periods, many expressed an interest in having various forms of water features, varying from traditional drinking fountains to high-rise spouting fountains. Historically, drinking fountains were much loved because they were beautiful architectural features, which created places where people could congregate and were once a feature of many Victorian and Georgian villages and towns. One of the reasons these public drinking fountains increasingly disappeared from our streets was the health risk they were perceived to present. With the increasing need for us to reduce single-use plastics, modern drinking fountains are now manufactured for the public to refill their reusable drink containers. As part of an initiative to reduce litter and pollution WPBC and Wessex Water are working together to install a number of water bottle refill units in the town and provide fresh water, free for all.

The water refill stations will be simple stand-alone units. WPBC wish to integrate them into the streetscape, making them highly visible by accompanying them with some form of contemporary artwork that draws attention to, enhances or otherwise relates to, the locations of the refill units. It is expected that the artworks will be separate standalone installations but they could incorporate the refill unit if appropriate. The water bottle refill units will be supplied from a separate budget, supported by Wessex Water. They are inclined to be visually low-impact and will be installed at appropriate locations with drainage and access to mains water.

Below are a few prompts from some of the comments we received from the public during the consultation phase, to stimulate thinking. The full consultation report is available on request.

- Artworks could be installed on the ground, on walls close to, or around, the units or above them, or some other way.
- Art may appear in surprise places, such as the underside of the Town Bridge (a popular suggestion), on the interior walls of public toilets, on rooftops, at the end of streets.
- Artworks could create meeting places and selfie/photo opportunities
- The refill units are discrete in scale and design, artworks could draw attention to them and make them more visible
- Maybe they could be positioned to connect both sides of the harbour?
- Artworks could tell the stories of Weymouth's history or reflect some of Weymouth's architectural features.

This is an exciting opportunity for artists to reinterpret the town, allowing visitors to discover art in unusual places and surprise visitors by delivering the unexpected.

Applications are invited from individual artists, or artist teams with experience in working in the public realm. It is expected that up to 6 artists will be selected to create artworks that reflect the theme of 'water', provide a sense of a 'trail' and have a narrative that connects them. A Creative Producer will curate the trail, liaising with artists and ensure the individual artworks form a coherent whole.

- Up to £14,000 is offered for each artwork, to cover all expenses - including artist fee, research, production of designs, site visits, making/fabrication, materials, production, delivery of artworks and overseeing of installation. There is a separate budget for installation of artworks.
- Artworks will be expected to reflect the theme of Weymouth's historic or contemporary relationship with water and signpost or highlight the location of the water bottle refill units.
- The artworks can be in any material but will need to be robust to withstand the town centre and coastal location and have a lifespan of a minimum of ten years. They will be frost proof, resilient, vandal resistant, colour fast and salt-water/wind resistant.
- Artworks will be expected to meet all health & safety requirements.
- The locations for artworks and water refill units have not yet been confirmed but it is expected that the sculptures/installations will demarcate a journey and connect various sites around the town, with specific attention to Hope Square, New Bond Street and the Esplanade.
- A Creative Producer will provide curatorial and practical support to all selected artists on the research and development of final designs and liaise with the council Project Manager on locations and installation.
- A designated council Project Manager will oversee all technical, licensing and installation needs, as well as liaising with the various Council departments and external partners, as required.
- Artists may be expected to contribute to interpretation and promotion of the artwork and overall project.
- We actively encourage using Dorset based suppliers, services, makers and materials for fabrication of artworks where possible.
- It is a requirement of the contract that the selected artists attend a site visit on Friday 22nd March.
- It is expected that all artworks will be installed by spring 2020

You are welcome to contact us for an informal conversation prior to submitting.

Email carolyn@b-side.org.uk to arrange.

Design Theme

The story of Weymouth can be told by its relationship to water. Weymouth is probably best known as a classic British seaside holiday town with its sandy bay, Georgian and Victorian seafront with seaside amusements and guest houses. However, it was once two entirely separate towns located either side of a tidal river, Weymouth on the south side and Melcombe Regis on north. These rival harbours competed for trade eventually becoming amalgamated as one, following the building of the first town bridge in 1593.

The main part of the present town has developed on a spur of low-lying land, much of it reclaimed, and is surrounded by water on three sides - the older harbour area, the backwater and wetlands of Radipole Lake and the well-known sandy beach and esplanade, each offering completely contrasting environments and attractions for visitors.

The oldest parts of the town are the harbourside areas either side of the bridge and at one time all the buildings were orientated in this direction. It was a port town with lots of comings and goings, a transitory population and reputedly the point of entry for the 'Black Death' in 1348. It is still a working harbour. The growing popularity of 'taking the waters' and sea bathing in the 18th Century, highlighted by the patronage of King George 3rd shifted the orientation and development of the town in the direction of the beach and this has remained the main focus of the town ever since. The backwater areas have been developed in part as a yacht marina and in part as a nature reserve with wetland habitats, hedgerow scrub, reedbeds and saline lagoons managed by the RSPB.

Whilst the seaside holiday aspects of Weymouth are well known, its harbour and the wetland wildlife areas are less so. Many historic architectural features remain but are relatively unnoticed. It is hoped that as well as highlighting the water bottle refill units, the artworks will help tell the lesser known aspects of Weymouth's story. See 'Weymouth's Seaside Heritage' English Heritage report for further information:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/weymouths-seaside-heritage/weymouths-seaside-heritage/>

Selection and Application

Selection Process

- Initial selection for shortlisting will be based on the quality of the ideas in relation to the theme of water and the artists track record presented in the application and CV. The Creative Producer will shortlist a number of artists to present to the Arts Advisory* selection panel.
- The Arts Advisory Panel, supported by the Creative Producer, will select up to 6 artists from the shortlist to take forward to an initial design stage.
- The 6 selected artists will be required to attend a research and development day on Friday 22nd March, where they will visit potential sites and meet others involved in the project.
- Following the site visit the selected artists will be expected to present an outline proposal to include an estimate of costings for materials and fabrication. The selected artists may propose one or more designs/variations for the selection process.
- A fee of £1000 will be paid as part 1 of the staged payment contract, to cover the site visit costs and the delivery of the outline proposal. Stage 1 provides a point at which the contractor reserves the right to end the contract, should the outline proposal, for whatever reason, be deemed inappropriate or unachievable within budget.
- The artist will retain the copyright on all drawings and designs they produce for the primary commissioning contract.
- A final selection of ideas will be chosen and taken forward from the outline proposals.
- Those artists proposals selected to be taken forward to fruition will be given curatorial support by the Creative Producer, and the Project Manager to ensure each artwork is to the necessary standard of fabrication and is integral to the overall sense of the trail.

*The Arts Advisory Panel is a group of 7 elected WPBC Councillors, who will be supported on the selection by the Creative Producer

The following weightings will be used in the selection process:

Quality Criteria (60%)	Marks Available	Weighting %	
	1. Experience of successfully creating art installations in a public setting – demonstrating an understanding of durability of materials and health & safety issues.	0 - 4	20%
2. Demonstrating an understanding of the brief and its creative objectives.	0 - 4	10%	
3. Evidence of technical expertise in designing public art installations.	0 - 4	10%	
4. Evidence of working with multiple partners to deliver a successful project.	0 - 4	5%	
5. Evidence of ability to create public art that reflects places and their history	0 - 4	15%	
Total Quality	20	60%	
Price		40%	
	Total	20	100%

Application

Your application should include:

- An outline of your interest in this opportunity
- A description of your creative practice
- Your experience and track record of creating permanent work for the public realm
- Some initial thoughts, ideas of how you might approach this project in relation to the theme of ‘water’, including materials and fabrication method.
- A CV If you are applying as a team, include CV’s for all and a brief outline of how you will work together.
- Up to six images of previous artworks.
- URLs/ links to other media documentation of your work.

How to Apply

You must use CuratorSpace website to apply for this opportunity, if you are not already registered with CuratorSpace it only takes a few minutes to do this and then fill in the online application, use this link to take you directly to the commission and application portal

<https://www.curatorspace.com/opportunities/detail/weymouth-public-art-trail/3107>

If you have any difficulty using CuratorSpace please contact: Carolyn@b-side.org.uk

Deadline: Applications to be received by Friday 1st March 5pm

Timeline

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| 1. Deadline for submission of applications | Friday 1 st March |
| 2. Select & notify 12 artists for longlist | Friday 8 th March |
| 3. 6 artists selected and all artists notified of decision | by Friday 15 th March |
| 4. Contracts issued | by 22 nd March |
| 5. 6-week research period begins with a site visit | Friday 22 nd March |
| 6. Installation | Spring 2020 |
| 7. Launch | Spring 2020 |

Partners

Wessex Water is supporting the Weymouth community who wish to install water refill points. It will contribute to the costs of a set number of an agreed style of refill units with Wessex Water branding clearly visible. Wessex Water will provide expert advice on the location, installation and ongoing public health maintenance.



b-side has been appointed as the public art project delivery partner and supports the project as the Creative Producer

